

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BONN 18200

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: POST ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FRG

REF: BONN 17024 (NOTAL)

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BEGIN SUMMARY: NOW THAT THE BUNDESTAG ELECTION IS

BEHIND US, THE TENSIONS AND CONFLICTS IN THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND AMONG THE PARTIES, PAPERED OVER DURING THE CAMPAIGN, HAVE BROKEN OUT AGAIN. IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTES WITHIN THE SPD AND FDP AND DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE CDU AND CSU COMPETED FOR MEDIA SPACE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ELECTION RESULTS WERE KNOWN. SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND LIBERALS ARE JOCKEYING FOR POSITION IN THE COALITION NEGOTIATIONS WHICH BEGAN ON OCTOBER 25. KEY DISCUSSIONS WILL BE POSTPONED, HOWEVER, UNTIL AFTER THE FDP NATIONAL CONVENTION NOVEMBER 19-20. DESPITE DIFFERENCES, ESPECIALLY OVER ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ISSUES, PERSONNEL DECISIONS AND INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS, IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY WILL REACH AGREEMENT AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE OFFICE IN MID-DECEMBER. END SUMMARY.

1. EVEN BEFORE ANYONE COULD GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP AFTER THE VOTES WERE COUNTED, THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE CDU AND CSU RESULTED IN AN EXPLOSION. IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING STRAUSS, IN THE PRESENCE OF A "QUICK" REPORTER, LASHED OUT AT KOHL AND THE NORTHERNERS FOR LOSING THE ELECTION. HE ALSO HINTED THAT HE MIGHT GO AHEAD WITH PLANS FOR A NATION-WIDE CSU. STRAUSS' COMMENTS CREATED CONSTERNATION IN CDU HEADQUARTERS AND LED TO SOME CONFUSION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT KOHL WOULD GIVE UP HIS POSITION AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT IN MAINZ AND COME TO BONN AS CHAIRMAN OF A JOINT CDU/CSU FRAKTION IN THE BUNDESTAG. HE FINALLY AGREED THAT HE WOULD, PROVIDED STRAUSS AND THE CSU PLEDGED TO REMAIN IN THE FRAKTION FOR THE FULL FOUR YEARS. STRAUSS BACKED OFF ENOUGH TO SATISFY KOHL AND KOHL AGREED TO MAKE THE MOVE.

2. THERE ARE VERY CLEAR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO UNION PARTIES ABOUT WHICH STRATEGY SHOULD BE PURSUED TO BRING ABOUT THE DEMISE OF THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION BEFORE 1980. STRAUSS RECOMMENDS A TOUGH CONFRONTATION STRATEGY BECAUSE HE CLAIMS THE LIBERALS CAN NOT BE ENTICED AWAY FROM THE COALITION VIA CONCESSIONS FROM THE CDU/CSU. HE ARGUES ESPECIALLY THAT IN ATTEMPTING TO DO SO THE CDU WILL GIVE AWAY SOMETHING VALUABLE SUCH AS CONFIDENTIAL

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MAJORITY CONTROL IN THE BUNDESRAT FOR SOMETHING HE BELIEVES IS MARGINAL SUCH AS A CDU/FDP COALITION IN LOWER SAXONY OR IN THE SAARLAND.

3. WE DO NOT THINK STRAUSS REALLY WAS CONCERNED THAT THE CDU WOULD SACRIFICE MAJORITY CONTROL IN THE BUNDESRAT. RATHER, HE WAS MORE INTERESTED IN MAKING THINGS DIFFICULT FOR KOHL AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION. CLEARLY, STRAUSS

WOULD PREFER A STRATEGY WHICH WOULD FORCE THE EVENTUAL
DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FDP. THEREFORE, AN ABSOLUTE
CDU/CSU MAJORITY WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO A CDU/CSU-FDP
COALITION IN STRAUSS' EYES.

4. KOHL AND HIS SUPPORTERS AGREE THAT THE UNION PARTIES
CANNOT COUNT ON DESERTIONS FROM THE COALITION TO THE
OPPOSITION AS WAS THE CASE IN THE 1969-72 PERIOD. THEY
FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT IN MOST POLICY QUESTIONS THE
LIBERALS ARE CLOSER TO THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS THAN TO
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND THAT EVENTUALLY THE LIBERALS
WILL SEE THEIR INTEREST BEST SERVED BY CHANGING
PARTNERS. THE CDU STRATEGISTS ARE CONVINCED THAT, SHOULD

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 BONN 18200

THE LIBERALS FACE THE REAL POSSIBILITY OF A UNION
ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN 1980, WHICH WOULD RELEGATE THE
FDP TO THE POSITION OF A MINOR OPPOSITION PARTY, THE
LIBERALS WOULD LEAVE THE COALITION BEFORE IT WAS TOO
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LATE.

5. KOHL WILL HAVE HIS WORK CUT OUT FOR HIM
AS FRAKTION CHAIRMAN. HE DID NOT WANT TO LEAVE THE
PLEASANT SECURITY OF MAINZ BUT CDU ADVISORS PREVAILED
UPON HIM, POINTING OUT THAT HE COULD HAVE DIFFICULTY
IN MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE PARTY FROM MAINZ, AS THE
CENTER OF POLITICAL ACTION OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS WILL
BE BONN. ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, KOHL PLANS TO
INSTALL WALTER WALLMANN AS HIS PRINCIPAL DEPUTY IN THE
FRAKTION SO THAT HE CAN CONCENTRATE ON POLICY MATTERS
AND LEADERSHIP OF THE OPPOSITION. WALLMANN IS A TOUGH
AND INTELLIGENT POLITICIAN BUT KOHL WILL HAVE TO DEVOTE
SOME ATTENTION TO THE NITTY-GRITTY OF FRAKTION WORK OR
HE WILL RUN THE RISK OF LOSING CONTROL TO SOME OF THE
OTHER POWERFUL OPPOSITION FIGURES IN THE FRAKTION.

6. KOHL'S ASSESSMENT OF THE UNLIKELIHOOD OF DEFECTIONS
FROM THE FDP FRAKTION APPEARS REALISTIC. THE RIGHT-
WING OF THE FDP REMAINS A MINORITY, ALBEIT VERY
INFLUENTIAL ON ECONOMIC MATTERS. AMONG THE RIGHT-WING
FDP FRAKTION MEMBERS THERE DO NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY WHO
ARE LIKELY TO DEFECT TO THE UNION PARTIES. RIGHT-
WINGERS SUCH AS FRIDERICH'S AND LAMBS'DORFF ARE MORE
INTERESTED IN INSURING THAT LIBERAL ECONOMIC AND FISCAL
POLICIES NOT BE IGNORED IN THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION'S
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM THAN THEY ARE IN ENGAGING IN
QUIXOTIC BATTLE WITH THE LEFT-WING MAJORITY.

7. FORMER DEPUTY VICTOR KIRST OF THE BUNDESTAG
RECENTLY PUT A SHOT ACROSS THE BOW OF THE LIBERAL LEFT-
WINGERS, ESPECIALLY HAMBURG CHAIRMAN HELGA SCHUCHARDT
WHO HAD EDGED KIRST OUT FOR THE SAFE POSITION ON THE

LAND LIST. KIRST'S CRITICISM LED TO BRIEF SPECULATION THAT A NEW BOURGEOIS BLOC WAS BEING FORMED IN THE FDP BUT THIS DOES NOT APPEAR VERY LIKELY.

8. THE SPD MANAGED TO KEEP THE LID ON ITS INTERNAL PROBLEMS LONG ENOUGH TO LET THE KOHL-STRAUSS CONTROVERSY HOG THE HEADLINES. HOWEVER, IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS (JUSO'S), REINED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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DURING THE CAMPAIGN, WOULD LET OUT A BLAST. THIS THEY DID WHEN THE JUSO EXECUTIVE BOARD ISSUED AN ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN WHICH WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF THE SPD LEADERSHIP. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE JUSO'S ATTACKED THE EMPHASIS PLACED ON PERSONALITY (READ SCHMIDT) OVER SUBSTANCE, THE ARROGANCE, AS WELL AS THE INACCURACY, OF THE "MODELL DEUTSCHLAND" SLOGAN AND, MOST OF ALL, THE RELUCTANCE OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO RUN ON THEIR RECORD OF REFORM.

9. CONCURRENTLY WITH THE JUSO ELECTION CAMPAIGN CRITIQUE, THE NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA JUSO CHAPTER ISSUED A PAPER IN STRIDENT IDEOLOGICAL TERMS ATTACKING "BIG CAPITAL" AND CALLED FOR INCREASED GOVERNMENT CONTROLS. THE JUSO PERFORMANCE WAS TOO MUCH, EVEN FOR WILLY BRANDT, WHO IN THE PAST HAD PROTECTED THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS FROM THEIR CRITICS IN THE PARTY. BRANDT CALLED THE JUSO VIEWS "UNFERMENTED" AND ACCUSED THEIR LEADERSHIP OF BEING SO EAGER FOR HEADLINES THAT THEY GAVE AID TO THE SPD ENEMIES.

10. SOME SPD LEADERS, SUCH AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN KOSCHNICK, FEEL THAT IN GENERAL JUSO INFLUENCE IS ON THE DECLINE. THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS, HE FEELS, HAVE TROUBLE IN ATTRACTING MEMBERSHIP BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEGLECTED THEIR LINKS TO THE YOUNG TRADE UNIONISTS AND HAVE BECOME A HAVEN FOR SELF-PROCLAIMED INTELLECTUALS. THEY HAVE, AS A RESULT, LOST GROUND TO THE COMMUNISTS IN THE TRADE SCHOOLS.

11. IN ADDITION TO THE EXTERNAL DIFFICULTIES WITH THE JUSOS, BRANDT AND SCHMIDT ARE FACED WITH A NUMBER OF DIFFICULT PERSONNEL DECISIONS. A REPLACEMENT MUST BE FOUND FOR BOERNER AS SPD BUSINESS MANAGER. THE REPLACEMENT MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO BRANDT, SCHMIDT, AND THE SPD EXECUTIVE BOARD AND SHOULD HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH PARTY ORGANIZATIONAL WORK. EGON BAHR APPEARS TO LEAD ALL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 BONN 18200

OTHER CANDIDATES (EHMKE, FRIEDRICH, RUHNAU, ETC.),
ALTHOUGH HE LACKS ROOTS IN THE PARTY. A FINAL DECISION
HAS NOT AS YET BEEN MADE.

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12. THERE WILL BE SOME CABINET CHANGES IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH NOT AS MANY AS SCHMIDT WOULD HAVE PREFERRED HAD HE RECEIVED A SIZABLE MANDATE. MINISTER FOCKE HAS INDICATED SHE WANTS TO LEAVE, AND POST AND TRANSPORTATION MINISTER GSCHIEDLE WANTS TO DIVIDE HIS MINISTRY INTO TWO AND REMAIN AS POST MINISTER. LABOR MINISTER ARENDT HAS ALSO INDICATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MOVE ON, BUT SCHMIDT WANTS HIM TO STAY. IN ANY EVENT, DECISIONS AS TO THE NEWCOMERS IN THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER CABINET WILL NOT BE FINALLY DECIDED UNTIL THE LATTER PART OF NOVEMBER.

13. IRONICALLY, IT WAS THE QUESTION OF A SUB-CABINET POSITION -- ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW STATE SECRETARY FOR INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS IN THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE (BKA) -- WHICH HAS CAUSED THE MOST CONTROVERSY. ONE REASON FOR THE HEAT GENERATED BY THIS ISSUE WAS THAT IT REPRESENTS CONTINUING BEHIND-THE-SCENE SKIRMISHING BETWEEN SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER OVER CONTROL OF INNER-GERMAN POLICY. THE IDEA WAS FIRST FLOATED IN A PRE-ELECTION "SPIEGEL" INTERVIEW WITH BKA STATE SECRETARY SCHUELER. SCHMIDT ALSO MENTIONED THE IDEA IN RECENT WEEKS, MUCH TO THE ANNOYANCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER WHO VIEWS THE PROPOSAL AS AN INCURSION INTO HIS AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

14. THE IDEA MADE BUREAUCRATIC SENSE IN CONNECTION WITH SCHMIDT'S PLAN TO DISSOLVE THE INNER-GERMAN MINISTRY. HOWEVER, THE COALITION'S SLIM MAJORITY MADE THIS POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR SCHMIDT AND THEREFORE THERE IS LESS NEED FOR A NEW STATE SECRETARY IN THE BKA. MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT WOULD VERGE ON THE SUICIDAL FOR SCHMIDT TO FORCE A CONFRONTATION WITH GENSCHER OVER THIS MINOR ISSUE AND RISK COLLAPSE OF THE COALITION NEGOTIATIONS. AT THE FIRST MEETING WITH THE FDP, SCHMIDT BACKED AWAY FROM THE IDEA AND DROPPED, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, ANY PLANS FOR THE INNER-GERMAN STATE SECRETARY IN THE BKA.

15. GENSCHER ALSO HAS A STATE SECRETARY POSITION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO FILL WHICH WAS FORMERLY HELD BY

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MOERSCH. INTERIOR STATE SECRETARY BAUM, A CONFIDANT OF GENSCHER, RECENTLY TOLD US THAT HE HAS BEEN OFFERED THE JOB. HE HAS ALSO DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF TAKING

OVER THE VACANT JOB AS FDP SECRETARY-GENERAL FORMERLY
HELD BY BANGEMANN. BAUM, HOWEVER, PREFERS TO REMAIN IN
INTERIOR BECAUSE THIS JOB HAS MORE DOMESTIC/POLITICAL
CLOUT. BAUM REMARKED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF
FRAU HAMM-BRUECHER BECAME FOREIGN MINISTRY STATE
SECRETARY, ALTHOUGH SHE LACKS FOREIGN POLICY
EXPERIENCE.

16. ALTHOUGH THE COALITION NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN ON
OCTOBER 25, GENSCHER IS NOT PREPARED TO AGREE TO ANY
FINAL DECISIONS UNTIL AFTER THE FDP PARTEITAG
NOVEMBER 19-20. BOTH SIDES PLAN TO NAIL DOWN
THE DETAILS ON SUCH MATTERS AS REFORM OF THE PENSION AND
HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEMS BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT IS
FORMED IN ORDER TO AVOID THE AGREEMENT BECOMING UNSTUCK

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 BONN 18200

AS WAS THE CASE WITH "MITBESTIMMUNG."

17. THE PUBLICATION OF AN ARTICLE BY WILLY BRANDT IN
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WEEKLY "VORWAERTS" CREATED A STIR
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JUST AS THE COALITION NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN. BRANDT WROTE
THAT THE SPD MUST FULFILL THE PROMISES MADE AT THE PRE-
ELECTION DORTMUND PARTEITAG. THE NEW GOVERNMENT, HE
SAID, MUST DEVOTE ITS ATTENTION FIRST OF ALL TO SOLVING
THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM; IT MUST SECURE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES AND FIND JOBS FOR GERMAN YOUTH, WHICH HAS
BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD HIT BY THE RECESSION. BRANDT
ALSO CALLED FOR MORE EQUALITY AND FREEDOM IN THE
SOCIETY, AS WELL AS A MORE RECEPTIVE BUREAUCRACY.

18. BRANDT CITED THE NEED FOR INFORMATION TO ENABLE THE
GOVERNMENT TO MAKE MORE RATIONAL ECONOMIC DECISIONS.
THIS, HE SAID, CALLED FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR OF THE
ECONOMY TO MAKE KNOWN ITS INVESTMENT INTENTIONS TO THE
GOVERNMENT IN ADVANCE. THE LATTER POINT WAS PICKED UP
BY THE FDP SPOKESMAN, WHO SAID THE
LIBERALS WERE COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING A FREE MARKET
ECONOMY, AND FDP ECONOMICS MINISTER HANS FRIDERICH
CALLED THE DEMAND FOR MAKING INVESTMENT INTENTIONS KNOWN
IN ADVANCE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT
CONTROLS. AFTER ALL THIS, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE SPD
WILL ATTEMPT TO FORCE BRANDT'S VIEWS UPON THE
LIBERALS. BRANDT, HIMSELF, CONCLUDED HIS ARTICLE BY
SAYING THAT THE SPD MUST, WITHOUT HAVING A BAD CON-
SCIENCE, HAVE THE STRENGTH TO COMPROMISE.

19. THE EXTRA SEAT IN THE BUNDESTAG PICKED UP BY THE
SPD WHEN THE OFFICIAL RESULTS WERE ANNOUNCED GAVE THE
COALITION A PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST. THERE ARE REAL
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND THE
LIBERALS ABOUT HOW TO COME TO GRIPS WITH SOME OF THE

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WHICH PLAGUE THE FRG.
HOWEVER, THESE DIFFERENCES ARE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE AND
THE PRESSURES FOR COMPROMISE ARE VERY GREAT -- THERE
IS SIMPLY TOO MUCH TO LOSE IF THE TWO PARTIES DO NOT
FORM A GOVERNMENT WHEN THE BUNDESTAG CONVENES ON
DECEMBER 14.
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